Short Gestation Power Projects

*211. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to discourage their short gestation power project policy;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore; and

(c) How the capital for mega power projects is proposed to be arranged ensuring generation of power at a reasonable price?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI R. KUMARMANGALAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Docs not arise.

(c) The capital for mega projects will be arranged by the prospective developer themselves. Selection of the developer to take up any projects, would be generally done by inviting competitive offers anil it is expected that the process of competition will ensure generation of power at a reasonable price.

Improvement of HcalttvMcdical Facilities in Jails

*212. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a study conducted by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in respect of health and medical facilities available to inmates in Tihar and other jails in the country has revealed that a large number of undertrials and convicts died of tuberculosis detected at an advanced'stage of infection, rendering the conditions hazardous not only for the prisoners and inmates actually suffering but also for other inmates who suffer an unsuspecting exposure;

(b) if so, the steps proposed by the Commission to improve the health and medical facilities in the jails; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) undertake a study of custodial deaths in various jails in India, for the period 1995 to 31st January, 1998. The study, based on a sample of 195 cases, finally disposed off by the Commission reveals that the most number of deaths were caused due to lung diseases.

(b) and (c) NHRC, in order to improve the standard of health care in jails is evolving a proforma for thorough medical check up of the prisoners at the time of their admission. Further action in this regard would be taken by the States, as "prisons" is a State subject under Entry 4 List II State List under Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. However, the role of the Government of India has been to provide financial assistance under the Scheme of Modernisation of Prison Administration, to the State Governments, to supplement their efforts to improve prison infrastructure, living conditions of prisoners and to provide medical facilities in jails, etc. Moreover, the Tenth Finance Commission has also recommended financial assistance to the State Governments for providing medical facilities in jails.

Turnover of Handloom Corporations

*213. SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARI BHAI SHUKLA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the total turnover of the Orissa, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh Handloom Corporations has declined to 35.40% during the last four years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, alongwith the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to discontinue the Janata Cloth Scheme;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by Government to review the handloom Industry in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RAN A): (a) and (b) Based on the information furnished by the State Government concerned, the turnover of the Handloom Corporations of the States of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh has declined from the year 1994-95 to 1997-98 by about 64% and 43% respectively while the turnover of the Handloom Corporation of Gujarat has increased from the year 1994-95 to 1997-98 by about 31%. The performance of the State Handloom Corporations is monitored by the State Governments concerned. However, the possible reasons for decline in turnover may include inter-alia, inadequate measures taken by the State Corporations towards diversification of the products, development of value added product range.

(c) and (d) A Committee constituted in the year 1991, to review the Janata Cloth Scheme, observed that it has contributed to the de-skilling of the weavers by producing cloth of low unit value and therefore, recommended phasing out of the scheme. The Government after examining the recommendations of this Committee, introduced Package-II under Janata Cloth Scheme in the year 1993-94 with the objective of enabling handloom weavers to graduate to production of higher value textile goods and to provide alternate employment to handloom weavers displaced on account of phasing out of Janata Cloth Scheme and also decided to phase out the scheme by 1996-97. The Government, however, extended the scheme for the year 1997-98 so as to facilitate the transition.

(e) To deal with the issues of the Handloom Sector, periodic reviews are undertaken from time to time by the Government of India.

Upgradation of Garment Technology

*214. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any representation from the representatives of garment and textile industry for Rs. 2000 crores to upgrade its technology and improve competitiveness in the global market;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Government's action thereon;

(d) whether any Committee has been set up to look into the improvement of the textile industry; and

(e) is so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RAN A): (a) to (c) The garment export industry has represented for the creation of a fund to enable the industry to avail of soft loans for modernisation.

A proposal is under formulation to facilitate modernisation, through technological upgradation, of the textile industry. The intended objective is to improve production and productivity of the Indian textile industry to make it more competitive. Details of a Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme for the textiles sector are being worked out.

(d) and (e) It has been decided to set up an expert group under the Chairmanship of Shri S.R. Sathyam for the purpose of enabling the formulation of a new textile policy. The composition and the terms of reference are under finalisation.

Sick NTC Mills

*215. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have offered sick National Textiles Corporation (NTC) mills to the State Government;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal made to the State Governments and the reaction/response of the State Governments thereto, particularly that of Maharashtra;